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Behind the Lines

Helen Bagg

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THE PENN PUBLISHING COMPANY
PHILADELPHIA

Behind the Lines

A War Comedy in One Act

By

HELEN BAGG

Author of "First Aid," "Why Not Jim?" "Untangling Tony," "Whiskers," etc.

PHILADELPHIA
THE PENN PUBLISHING COMPANY
1918

PS3503
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1918

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JAN 10 1919

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Behind the Lines

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Behind the Lines

CHARACTERS

MRS. HARRISON - - *chairman of the Red Cross Committee of the Berkeley Woman's Club.*

SUE HARRISON - - *her daughter, secretary of the committee.*

MOLLY TRACY - - - *her niece, an emergency driver.*

MRS. MERRIFIELD - - *vice-chairman of the committee.*

MRS. FAIRFAX
MRS. JULIA FENTON
MRS. OLIVER
PETTY OLIVER
} *workers on the committee.*

JESSIE - - - - - - *the elevator girl at the Berkeley Arms Hotel.*

GEORGIANA - - - - *the bell girl at the Berkeley Arms Hotel, late of New York.*

TIME.—The summer of 1918. One morning.

PLACE.—Berkeley. A small town near New York.

SCENE.—A room in the Berkeley Arms Hotel which is being used as a workroom by the Red Cross Committee of the local Woman's Club.

STORY OF THE PLAY

The Red Cross Committee of Berkeley has chosen Lieutenant Tom French, the famous American aviator or "ace," as their "godson." But Sue Harrison and Molly Tracy think a Berkeley boy should have been chosen, and Sue as secretary has secretly sent all the letters and presents to Jack Spalding, whom she loves. The chairman of the committee is about to meet Lieutenant French, and the girls are scared. The committee hears that Jack has been captured, and are sorry they had not chosen him for godson. Then Tom telephones to Molly—he and Jack are together in New York. It all comes out. Molly is Tom's bride. Sue and Jack are engaged. Jack is the real godson. Every one is satisfied and happy.

COSTUMES, ETC.

MRS. HARRISON. About fifty. A portly, pompous woman, always in a hurry to get to a committee meeting somewhere. Wears street costume, hat, wrap, gloves, veil.

SUE HARRISON. About twenty-three. She has a rather independent manner. She is supposed to live in the hotel, and at first entrance wears Red Cross uniform, white gown, cap, etc. At later entrance wears street costume, hat, wrap, etc.

MOLLY TRACY. About twenty. A pretty girl, in uniform of an emergency driver—khaki-colored dress, with pleated waist, cap to match of the "overseas" pattern, "Sam Brown belt" around waist and crossing from right shoulder to hip, etc.

MRS. MERRIFIELD. About fifty. Large, florid, baby-faced. Sentimental, not to say mushy. Is sup-

posed to live in the hotel, and wears Red Cross uniform.

MRS. FAIRFAX. About thirty-five. A pleasant-looking matron, quietly dressed in street costume.

MRS. JULIA FENTON. About twenty-five. A very charming young matron, very recently a bride. She is fashionably dressed in street costume, and is lively and "up-to-date."

MRS. OLIVER. About sixty. Sharp features and a still sharper tongue. Street dress.

PETTY OLIVER. Sixteen or seventeen. Rather of the doll-baby type, dressed in the extreme of style as to length of skirt, height of heels, size of hat, etc. Street dress.

JESSIE. About twenty. Wears a plain dark dress, with buttons and braid, and if desired a uniform cap with the word "Elevator."

GEORGIANA. About thirteen. All legs and pig-tails. She is dressed as nearly like a bell-boy as any one can be without wearing trousers.

PROPERTIES

For general properties see description under Scene Plot, including telephone, Red Cross supplies, sewing machine, etc. Music of band, heard off stage, requires a phonograph.

MRS. HARRISON: Wrapped framed picture of a young officer. Large hand-bag. Watch. Letter. Newspaper. Eye-glasses.

JESSIE: Dust-cloth. Hammer. Nails. Ring.

MOLLY: Partly finished sock.

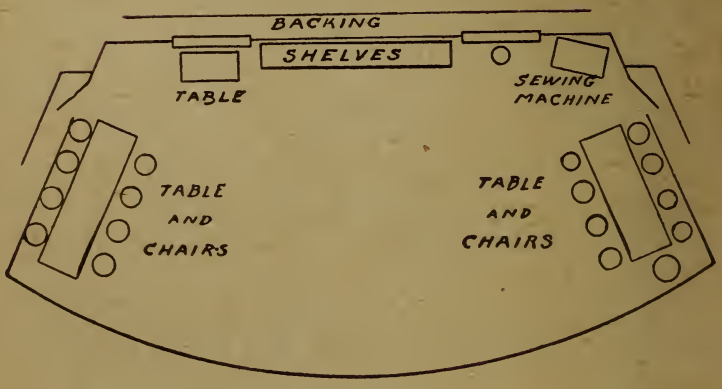
GEORGIANA: Framed picture, wrapped.

PETTY: Pocket mirror. Bell button on wall. Pillow.

MRS. OLIVER: Two hanks of "baby blue" yarn.

MRS. FAIRFAX: Pajamas.

SCENE PLOT



SCENE.—A large room, evidently one of the hotel parlors, furnished as a Red Cross workroom. Doors at R. and L. Windows up R. and L. At C. shelves piled high with garments, knitted goods, and bundles. On either side of the room is a long work table covered with sheeting that hangs down to floor and piled with the implements of Red Cross work, gauze, flat-irons, silver knives, a knitting machine, yarn, flannel, measures, etc. Chairs up L., down L., and along tables. Small table with telephone up R. Sewing machine up L. On the walls, printed notices reading thus: "Do not speak to the workers; this work demands accuracy." "Please do not waste the time of the Committee explaining why you do not care to make the Kitchener toe." "The work behind the lines must be as perfect as that done at the Front." "No, they will *not* shrink up to the proper size when washed!" "Why insist that a sweater measures twenty-three inches when the yardstick contradicts you?"

NOTE: The windows are not essential to the plot. This play may easily be given on a platform without set scenery.

Behind the Lines

SCENE.—*A parlor in a hotel. Window or windows in flat at back. Doors* R. *and* L. *Shelves up* C. *piled with Red Cross supplies, packages, etc. Small table with telephone up* R. *Sewing machine up* L. *Long tables covered with white cloth and piled with Red Cross work at* R. *and* L. *Chairs along these tables. Chair down* L. *and another up* L.

(*When the curtain rises,* JESSIE *and* GEORGIANA *are hanging out of the two windows, watching a parade of newly drafted men. The music of a band can be heard from outside, also the sound of cheering.*)

JESSIE (*excitedly*). There he is—the third from the end—with the red hair! Ain't he grand? Hurrah!

GEORGIANA. That bow-legged guy? I thought you said he was good lookin'!

JESSIE. Lots you know about looks—at your age. (*Leaning out and waving frantically.*) Hullo, Jim! (*To* GEORGIANA.) He seen me, kiddo, he seen me!

GEORGIANA (*absorbed*). Ain't them Boy Scouts grand?

JESSIE. There, he's gone! (*Bursting into tears.*) He's g-gone! Ooooh!

GEORGIANA (*sympathetic but shocked*). Aw, quit it, Jessie. An' you a elevator girl, too! Anybody'd think they was on their way to the trenches instead of just goin' into camp. Oh, do dry up!

JESSIE. I can't help it—they look so nice, and they'll be going away so soon.

GEORGIANA. Sure they will, the lucky stiffs! Gee,

I wisht I was a feller! I bet I could lick a Hun just as well as that bow-legged beau of yours.

JESSIE. You could not. He's the swellest scrapper in this town, and you know it. You'd ought to see his muscles, why ——

GEORGIANA. It ain't brute force that's goin' to win this war, it's brains.

JESSIE. Oh, is that so? Well, ain't we lucky to have you on our side!

GEORGIANA. You'd be surprised, wouldn't you, to hear that I was in the Secret Service?

JESSIE. Well, rather.

GEORGIANA. I am, though.

JESSIE. Wake up, kiddo; ain't you sleeping kind of late this morning?

GEORGIANA (*stamping her foot*). I am, I tell you! A Boy Scout and me are in it together. We listen around for spies, and when we catch one we're goin' to turn him over to the Fed'ral authorities.

JESSIE. Well, I never!

GEORGIANA. We ain't caught none yet, but maybe we will before the summer's done. Hotels is awful good places to catch spies.

JESSIE. Oh?

GEORGIANA. Yep. I'm listenin' every chanst I get. Last night I laid on my stummick under the lounge in the smoking-room fer over an hour.

JESSIE (*severely*). You keep that up and you'll lose your job—that's about what you'll catch. (*Unbending suddenly.*) Say, what do they do in the smoking-room?

GEORGIANA (*contemptuously*). Oh, same as the women—jes' gab!

(*Enter* MRS. HARRISON, *hurriedly,* L. *She carries a square package, loosely wrapped, and a large and important looking hand-bag.*)

MRS. HARRISON. Well, where are the workers, I should like to know?

JESSIE (*running down* R. *and instantly becoming*

very busy dusting a table). Oh, good-morning, Mrs. Harrison! I guess they just stepped out to watch the parade.

(GEORGIANA *follows* JESSIE.)

MRS. HARRISON (*disgustedly, as she comes down* L.). To watch the parade—and all this work to be done! Hasn't my daughter been here?

JESSIE. Yes, ma'am, Miss Sue was here all morning. (*Aside to* GEORGIANA *with a grimace.*) Cat!

MRS. HARRISON (*examining some unfinished work on table* L.). I said when they made me chairman of this committee that a hotel was no place for a workroom; altogether too many opportunities for distraction. I suppose dozens of women have been in here to ask for wool and found no one to attend to them!

GEORGIANA (R., *promptly*). No, they ain't, because Miss Sue give me ten cents to call her if any one come, and nobody ain't, except Mr. Pickering from the Old Gents' Home, and he brung back two hanks because they didn't match the sweater he's knittin'.

MRS. HARRISON. Dear, dear, organizing things is such a responsibility! You simply get them started for somebody else to run into the ground. But I did think I could trust Susy!

JESSIE (*dusting furiously, while* GEORGIANA *stands staring as only a child of thirteen can stare*). Yes, ma'am.

MRS. HARRISON (*unwrapping her bundle*). Mr. Pickering is one of our most faithful knitters—the idea of giving him yarn that didn't match! Well, I can't stay. I'm due at an Infant Welfare Committee—(*looks at watch*) ten minutes ago. (*She takes from the wrappings a large newspaper print of a very handsome young man in the uniform of an airman.*) I wish you would hang this somewhere for me, Jessie; I simply haven't time.

(*All three move to* C.)

JESSIE (*taking it with an awed look*). Oh!

MRS. HARRISON (*forgetting her haste*). That is Lieutenant Thomas French, the celebrated aviator.

GEORGIANA (*with a gasp*). Gosh! The Ace?

MRS. HARRISON (*with a glance of reproof*). Yes. I cut it out of a magazine. Our committee has adopted him as a godson during the war.

JESSIE. Is he the one that killed seven German airplanes, ma'am?

MRS. HARRISON. Eight, my dear, eight. His mother is an old friend of mine.

GEORGIANA (*enviously*). Some skirts has all the luck! I wisht I was his mother!

MRS. HARRISON. Dear me, child! Well, next time we send him a package, we'll let you put in one of those wash-cloths that you've been knitting, and then you'll be his godmother, just like the rest of us.

GEORGIANA (*completely awed*). Gee! Me send him a wash-rag—gee!

MRS. HARRISON (*moving toward the door* L.). Tell my daughter that I will be back just as soon as I can get away from the Infant Welfares.

JESSIE. }
GEORGIANA. } Yes, ma'am.

MRS. HARRISON (*going out at* L.). I am so provoked about Mr. Pickering!

(*Exit.* JESSIE *busies herself about hanging the picture up* R. *She finds a hammer and some tacks or nails and climbs on a chair.* GEORGIANA *seats herself on the window sill up* R. *and watches* JESSIE *work.*)

GEORGIANA. Say, is that straight—about him bein' their godson?

JESSIE. Sure it is. I was here the day they talked about doing it. Some of the ladies wanted to pick one of the town boys, but the rest were bound to have this one because he was a New York Ace. I s'pose a private wasn't good enough for 'em.

GEORGIANA. Ain't that just like these swell dames! Say, here comes Miss Tracy, an' she's got a uniform on! (*She leans out of the window.*)

JESSIE. She's an emergency driver. I think the uniform's grand. (*She pounds her finger as she drives the last nail.*) Ouch!

GEORGIANA (*leaving the window and crossing to door at* R.). Oh, I don't know—I think a bell girl's uniform is cheeker. (*Yawning and stretching.*) I guess I better get on the job for a while.

(*Exit at* R. JESSIE *jumps down and stands surveying her work.* MOLLY TRACY *enters at* L. *She stands a moment, looking at the picture with a very tender look in her eyes, having given just a faint exclamation as she entered and saw it.* JESSIE *turns and sees her.*)

JESSIE. I've just put him up. Don't he look cozy and nice?

MOLLY (*with a little sigh*). He does. (*With an effort.*) Why, where are all the workers?

JESSIE. Out rubberin' at the parade. Say, Miss Molly, I seen you drivin' your car in it.

MOLLY (*sitting* R. *and taking a sock from her bag*). Yes?

JESSIE. You done fine.

MOLLY. Thank you. I don't believe it's as hard as running an elevator.

JESSIE. Oh, that's nothin'—any fool can run an elevator!

MOLLY (*meditatively*). I wonder if lots of women aren't saying that about the men's work they've taken up?

JESSIE (*easily*). Land, yes. Ain't we always known we could do anything they could if we had to? Say, my friend was in the parade, too.

MOLLY. Was he?

(*Goes to table* L. *and looks at some of the work there.*)

JESSIE (R., *blushingly*). He has red hair—awful distinguished looking—you prob'ly noticed him? He's a cook.

MOLLY (*heartily*). Why, Jessie, he's very important, isn't he?

JESSIE. Sure he is. It's all right to have generals an' majors fluffin' round, lookin' important, but believe me, it's the cooks that count.

MOLLY (*visibly impressed*). Of course it is. How splendid to be engaged to one!

JESSIE (*shyly, twisting her ring around consciously*). Well, he says it is; I ain't been long enough to know. We only fixed it up last night; I couldn't make up my mind.

MOLLY (*gazing dreamily at the aviator's picture*). A uniform is a great help in making up one's mind, isn't it?

JESSIE. I should say. Of course I meant to take him some time, but I wasn't goin' to be in a hurry; but they say them French girls are awful slick—and you know yourself how popular a cook is!

MOLLY. Yes, indeed. Oh, dear, I don't see what is the matter with this sock! It has the oddest look.

JESSIE (*going* L. *to her*). Maybe I can tell.

(*Examines it.*)

MOLLY. Have I done anything very dreadful?

JESSIE. No, indeed; just put the heel on the front needle, that's all.

(*Enter* SUE HARRISON, R., *as they are bending over the sock. She has evidently been watching the parade from another room of the hotel, as she has no wraps with her.*)

SUE (*crossing* L.). Hullo, Molly, in trouble again?

MOLLY. As usual.

JESSIE. Shall I rip it for you?

MOLLY (*taking the sock from* JESSIE). No, indeed. Ripping is the one thing that I can do really well, and I don't intend to hand it over to anybody else.

(JESSIE *crosses* R. SUE *moves around the room, putting things in readiness for the workers on their return. Suddenly she sees the aviator's picture.*)

SUE (R. C.). Good gracious, who hung that up?

JESSIE (*at door* R.). I did. Your Ma told me to. She got him out of a magazine. (*She exits* R.)

SUE (*crossing* L. *to* MOLLY). Molly, that young wretch up there is going to ruin everything!

MOLLY (*alarmed*). Oh, no, he isn't! Only—I do wish you had let me write and tell him everything. I could have made him promise ——

SUE. Promise? What's a promise to a young scamp like that? Look at his eye!

MOLLY. I think it's a very nice eye.

SUE (*severely*). Nice, but treacherous. The sort of man you could trust with anything in the world but a joke.

MOLLY. I don't consider it a joke.

SUE. Neither do I, but he would. I know that kind.

MOLLY (*rising, a little irritated*). Even so, I don't see what harm his picture is going to do.

SUE. Well, you will in a minute. Mother had a letter this morning from Jack, saying that he was sending one. (*Crosses* R., *and is busy at table* R.)

MOLLY (L.). Oh, dear, why did we do it? I feel so horrid about it all the time—just like a German spy!

(*Enter* GEORGIANA, R., *just in time to hear this speech. She has come in to deliver a package which she carries under one arm, but on hearing this very suspicious speech she at once dives under the table at* R. *and, hidden by some overhanging flannel or gauze which is on the table, listens happily.*)

SUE. So do I, but I'd never dare own up now. Mother'd scalp me. Besides, it was the right thing to do. It's a perfect shame ——

(*Enter* MRS. JULIA FENTON, L.)

JULIA. What's a perfect shame? Wool given out again?

SUE. Hello, Julia! No, the wool's all right, but ——

(*She pauses and looks at* MOLLY. JULIA *throws off her wrap, up* L.)

JULIA. Well, what's wrong then? (*She sees the picture.*) Oh my, who's that?

MOLLY (L.). That is Lieutenant Thomas French.

SUE (R., *with a grimace*). Our godson.

JULIA (C., *turning away*). Take him away. He's too depressing a sight for a married woman.

MOLLY (*suddenly*). Susy, let's tell her. I believe she'd understand.

SUE. Maybe. There always was something sort of human about Julia.

MOLLY. She was the worst flirt in five states, if that's what you mean.

JULIA (*hastily*). Of course I'll understand. Is it about the godson?

(JULIA, SUE, MOLLY *come down* C.)

SUE. It is. You remember, Julia, when the committee decided to adopt a godson to send letters and packages to, some of us felt he should be one of the town boys and not a stranger?

JULIA. Yes. I was one of them.

MOLLY. Susy, don't you think she ought to be sworn to secrecy before you tell her anything more?

SUE. Julia Fenton, if you dare to tell, we'll ——

MOLLY. We'll tell John just how near you came to jilting him for Fred Armstrong the summer before you were married.

JULIA (*quickly*). Of course I won't tell. I have a sense of honor, even if you girls haven't.

SUE. Well, we felt, Molly and I, that it wasn't fair to send packages and letters to a perfect stranger, when we had among our own town boys a young man like—like ——

MOLLY. Like Jack Spalding. Jack grew up with us ——

JULIA (*reminiscently*). I always liked Jack. He was my first beau.

SUE. We all liked him; and he was the very first

man to enlist in this town; but just because he is poor and hasn't a lot of important relatives, and this Lieutenant French is rich and a heart smasher ——

MOLLY (L. C.). Oh, no, Susy, he isn't a heart smasher—I—I know—that is, I feel sure that he isn't!

JULIA (*dryly*). Well, if he isn't, with those eyes, he is sailing under false colors.

SUE (R. C.). But, listen, Julia; this is what we did, and it's awful! You know I'm secretary of this committee, so I had to write the letters and mail the packages. Well, I've sent them all to Jack Spalding!

JULIA (*horrified*). But, Sue, that's perjury, isn't it?

SUE (*recklessly*). I don't know what it is, but I did it.

MOLLY. We did it; I helped.

SUE (*seriously*). It wasn't the letters and the packages that I wanted Jack to have, it was the encouragement from the women of his town, who had always known him. I felt that we owed it to him to let him know that we appreciated him and stood behind him! Lots of the other women would have felt so, too, if it hadn't been for Mother. Mother dislikes Jack dreadfully.

MOLLY. No, she doesn't, dear; it's just that she's afraid that you don't dislike him enough.

SUE (*rebelliously*). Well, I don't. I'm crazy about him, and I don't care who knows it. I'd rather marry him than a dozen old Aces—so there!

JULIA (*quickly*). I get you!

SUE. And now Mother gets a letter from Jack saying that he's just sent her a photograph!

MOLLY. Which won't agree with this one a little bit! (*Points to picture up* R.)

JULIA. Doesn't Jack know what you've done?

SUE. No, and he'd be furious if he did. He always signs his letters "Your affectionate godson" and I—I manage to lose the envelopes.

JULIA. That's a nice mess, children, and I don't see how you're going to get out of it.

MOLLY (*savagely*). We'll watch our chance and suppress that photograph.

JULIA. That's only putting off the evil day. You'll have to tell the truth.

MOLLY } (*horrified*). Julia!
SUE }

JULIA. It will be unpleasant, of course, the truth always is—I despise it myself—but in this case you've nothing else left.

MOLLY. } Oh, Julia!
SUE. }

JULIA. Yes, they'll have to know; but before we tell them, we'll boost Mr. Jack Spalding's stock so high that they won't feel disappointed at all.

SUE. But how?

JULIA. Leave it to me. I have a cousin just back from the Front, and he's told me the most wonderful things that he's seen men do over there; I shall tell them to the committee and give Private Jack Spalding all the credit.

MOLLY. But will they believe?

JULIA. They will if I tell them. (*Sweetly.*) My husband says I'm the most truthful little soul he ever knew. (MOLLY *groans.*)

SUE (*doubtfully*). Yes, of course, but you must remember, Julia, that you'll be talking to women—not to husbands.

JULIA. My dear, what the late Mr. Barnum said of the American public applies to women as well as to—husbands.

(GEORGIANA, *in trying to effect a noiseless escape, bumps her head with a loud crack against the top of the table.*)

MOLLY (*sharply*). What's that?

JULIA. It's somebody under the table! (GEORGIANA *makes a dive for the door.*) You little wretch, come back here! (*As* GEORGIANA, *badly scared, pauses,* SUE *rushes up* R. *to her, takes her by the arm and brings her down* R. C. GEORGIANA *still clutches*

package.) What do you mean by hiding and listening that way?

SUE. Georgiana, I am surprised!

MOLLY. You bad little girl!

GEORGIANA (*defiantly*). I ain't a little girl; I'm a Secret Service. I have to listen to things.

JULIA. Indeed? How long have you been here?

GEORGIANA (*sniffling*). Ever since you come in.

MOLLY. Mercy on us! Look here, if you tell what you've heard ——

SUE. We'll take that nice buttony uniform away from you and ——

JULIA. Don't tell her that. Tell her what you'll do for her if she doesn't tell. I'll buy you all the candy you can eat, Georgiana, if you'll be a good girl and forget what you heard us say; will you?

GEORGIANA. Mebbe. I'll go an' think it over by myself.

(*Exit importantly,* R.)

JULIA. Now you see what a little tact does? But that was a close shave.

SUE (*shivering*). Close!

MOLLY. I don't believe we can trust her.

JULIA. When people get themselves into such holes as you have, they must trust somebody. Do any of the committee know him?

(*Pointing to the Lieutenant's picture.*)

SUE. Only Molly.

JULIA (*walking meditatively to the window up* L.). Oh, Molly knows him!

MOLLY (*very consciously*). Very—very slightly!

JULIA. I see. Well, I should think —— (*Looking out of the window.*) Here's Mrs. Fairfax and Mrs. Oliver and Petty Oliver.

SUE. Oh, let's get to work—we don't want to look like conspirators!

(*She and* MOLLY *go to table* L. *and busy themselves feverishly with bandages.*)

JULIA (*coming down* C.). Petty's wearing a "widow cap" for my brother Sam, and Sam only went last week to the training camp! I suppose they think they're engaged.

SUE (*primly*). Girls are such idiots!

(*Enter,* L., MRS. FAIRFAX, MRS. OLIVER *and* PETTY OLIVER. *They all come down* R.)

MRS. OLIVER. Well, I said to her right then and there, "I distinctly stated when I gave you those wash-cloths that they were to go to Belgians and to no one else!" Said I, "I consider that the crying needs of Belgium should be satisfied before anybody else is helped, and that's where I wanted my wash-cloths to go." Said I, "And here you go and send everything to a clearing house and distribute them indiscriminately." Said I, "I'd like to know how the Red Cross expects the women of this country to go on doing their duty in the face of such gross mismanagement as that?"

SUE. Oh, good-morning, Mrs. Oliver! Mrs. Fairfax—why, here's Petty, too! I do hope you're all going to stay and work?

MRS. FAIRFAX (*sitting* R., *and getting immediately to work*). Yes. I had an hour before the children's luncheon, so I thought I'd make a few bandages.

PETTY (*up* R., *taking a glance at herself in her pocket mirror*). I'm awfully tired of making bandages, but I simply cannot learn to knit. Sam says the sweater I made for him is so peek-a-boo that no modest man would dare wear it.

(*She picks up two or three pieces of work before she makes up her mind what she wants to do.* MRS. OLIVER *crosses down* L., *seats herself away from the table and opens her bag, taking out a couple of unwound hanks of baby blue yarn.* JULIA *sits at table* R. *and works.*)

MRS. OLIVER. These young men are getting sadly

spoiled, I fear. It will take some time to put them back in their places again.

MRS. FAIRFAX (*sadly*). If they'll only come back to us safely I don't think we shall mind their being spoiled.

MOLLY (*glancing involuntarily at the picture*). Yes—oh, yes!

PETTY (*following the glance*). Why, who are you getting excited over, Molly? Is it the godson?

MOLLY (*frankly*). I'm excited over all of them—every single one! I just love them all.

JULIA (*with decision*). We have cause to be proud of the men from our town. Take Jack Spalding, for instance ——

MRS. OLIVER. Petty, touch the button; I want that bell girl to come and hold this wool for me.

PETTY (*rising and touching bell,* R.). Yes, Mother, dear.

MOLLY (*jumping up*). Let me do it. We oughtn't to take Georgiana away from her duties.

MRS. OLIVER (*waving her back*). I've never seen her doing anything more important than reading movie magazines since she's been around here, so I guess it won't hurt her to do her bit for the country occasionally.

MOLLY (*subsiding*). Oh, no, of course not.

JULIA (*with determination*). Speaking of doing one's bit, I had a letter from a cousin of mine, just returned from the Front, saying that young Jack Spalding had—well—distinguished himself, and ——

MRS. FAIRFAX (*sweetly*). That's very nice, isn't it? I wonder why Mrs. Merrifield isn't with us this morning? She left her pajamas half finished yesterday, and they really should go in to-morrow's bundle.

MRS. OLIVER. I saw her out on the veranda talking to that Italian boy who plays the 'cello in the hotel orchestra, so I don't think you need expect her for some time.

SUE. She likes to practice her Italian on him when she gets a chance.

MRS. OLIVER. Well, she gets the chance quite often,

I notice. However, it's none of my business, I suppose!

MRS. FAIRFAX. No, it isn't, really, is it? Our business is to see how many bandages we can turn out, and how well we can do our work behind the lines.

PETTY. Sam says he's afraid the war will be over before he gets there, and it provokes him dreadfully when he's getting so handy with the bayonet!

(MRS. MERRIFIELD'S *voice is heard off stage at* L.)

VOICE (*very sugary*). Till to-morrow, then, naughty boy!

MRS. OLIVER. Practicing her Italian!

(*Enter* MRS. MERRIFIELD, L.)

MRS. MERRIFIELD. So sorry to be late, but I was detained. Oh, his picture!

(*Her foot slips on a small rug and she goes down in an unhappy heap. All jump up. The four young women run to her.* GEORGIANA *enters at* R. *and stands staring.* MRS. MERRIFIELD *groans.*)

SUE. Oh, dear Mrs. Merrifield, are you hurt?

MOLLY. Did you break anything?

(MOLLY *and* SUE *help her up,* JULIA *brings a chair,* PETTY *a pillow. They seat her down* R.)

JULIA. There!

MRS. OLIVER (*reseating herself down* L.). It's those French heels! I've warned you, Cordelia, a dozen times ——

MRS. MERRIFIELD. It was not my heels; it was that wretched little rug on this slippery floor!

MRS. FAIRFAX. Georgiana, take up that rug before anything more happens.

GEORGIANA. Yes, ma'am.

(*Rolls up rug, takes it out.*)

MRS. MERRIFIELD. If I could only get my breath!

MRS. OLIVER. You could if you wouldn't wear those lace-down-the-front corsets. I never believed in them.

SUE (*feeling* MRS. MERRIFIELD'S *bones in what she believes to be a very scientific manner.* MOLLY *and* PETTY, R. C., *watch, very intently interested*). I hope nothing's broken, but we'd better make an examination.

MRS. MERRIFIELD (*angrily*). No, you won't. You shan't practice any of your First Aid lessons on me—not while I live and breathe.

(*Reënter* GEORGIANA, *who also watches up* C.)

MOLLY (*earnestly*). Her ankle looks awfully queer and fat to me. Maybe it's out of joint.

MRS. MERRIFIELD. It isn't. You keep away from my ankle!

PETTY. Let's snap it back again.

MOLLY. No, let me do it.

MRS. MERRIFIELD (*wildly*). No! None but an experienced hand shall snap my ankles!

SUE. I don't believe you're hurt at all.

MRS. MERRIFIELD. Well, I hope not. I've no time to be hurt, let me tell you. What with surgical dressings, food conservation classes, canteen work, and my French and Italian—I'm taking up both so that I can read to the wounded—I simply haven't a moment to myself. As I was saying to that poor boy out there ——

MRS. OLIVER. Yes, we heard you.

(SUE *and* MOLLY *return to their work,* L. JULIA *sits and works,* R. PETTY *seats herself at table* R.)

MRS. MERRIFIELD. He's a genius, and so far from home! My heart aches for him. I suppose nobody understands all that we people of temperament suffer—nobody! (*She adjusts her cap and goes to work.*)

MRS. FAIRFAX (*picking pajamas from table* R.). Here are your pajamas, dear, that you didn't finish yesterday.

MRS. MERRIFIELD. I don't feel like pajamas today. I think I'll make bandages. Talking to that poor boy has depressed me terribly.

MRS. OLIVER. Here, Georgiana, sit down and hold this yarn for me. I want to cast on this sweater.

GEORGIANA (*edging away*). I ain't got time. I got to go and set in the office.

JULIA (*apprehensively*). Yes, really, Mrs. Oliver, the poor child ——

MRS. OLIVER. Even a child can do something for her country. Come here, you! (GEORGIANA *comes down* L., *takes a chair at end of table and submits to having the wool slipped over her wrists.*) Keep your wrists still, and don't scowl; it makes you look cross-eyed.

GEORGIANA. Yes, ma'am.

MRS. FAIRFAX (*eyeing the baby blue wool*). I suppose the sweater is for Petty?

MRS. OLIVER. No, indeed. It's for the Andrews boy next door. He's gone into the aviation. I couldn't get a bit of dark blue in the store, and as I had this in the house, I made up my mind to use it. Up in the air no one will know what he has on.

JULIA. Speaking of the Andrews boy, I heard yesterday that young Jack Spalding ——

GEORGIANA. Aw, my foot's asleep!

MRS. OLIVER. Never mind. Keep your wrists still.

JULIA. Has done such a brave thing. Just think, girls, he went out alone into No Man's Land and took four—(*she surveys her audience appraisingly*) no, three Boches, all by himself.

PETTY. Goodness, how reckless!

MRS. MERRIFIELD. Well, of course, we can only do our best, but I must say that compared with our dear godson's eight aeroplanes three Boches sound rather tame.

SUE (L.). Tame! Do you call it tame to live night and day in a trench half full of dirty water and mud and rats, and to be ready to go over the top any minute and be trench-knifed by a horrid brute of a

German? I should prefer the air myself; it's clean, at any rate.

PETTY (R.). Oh, well, you know, dear, you were always rather partial to Jack.

MRS. OLIVER (*down* L.). I've often told your mother that I considered it providential that something came up to remove that young man.

MRS. MERRIFIELD (*down* R.). A handsome fellow like that, with no prospects, is a perfect scourge to a community.

SUE (*angrily*). He has prospects! He ——

(*She pauses as* MOLLY *gives a warning cough.* MRS. HARRISON *enters at* L., *still in a hurry.*)

MRS. HARRISON. All at work? How splendid! I would have been here before, but the Board of the Infant Welfare was meeting to-day, and they are so long winded—I simply couldn't get away.

MRS. MERRIFIELD. One can always manage to do one more thing. When I get through my French and Italian—I'm taking them so that I can read to the wounded—I mean to take up Russian, and then ——

MRS. OLIVER. Top off with some Chinese, I suppose. (*To* GEORGIANA.)

GEORGIANA (*wrinkling up her face*). My nose itches!

MRS. OLIVER. Nonsense! Don't be so frivolous!

MRS. HARRISON (*up* C.). I was in a rush to get here because I have a surprise—no, two surprises for you.

GEORGIANA. Oh, I bet he's sent it!

(MOLLY *coughs loudly to cover this break, and the others exclaim excitedly.*)

SUE (*quickly*). Two?

MRS. HARRISON (*who has been rooting in her bag and has brought forth a letter and a newspaper*). First, another letter from our godson.

ALL. Oh, do read it!

MRS. HARRISON (*rummaging for her glasses*). It's

very brief, but so delightful. I regret to say that my daughter has carelessly mislaid the envelope. (*Reads.*) "Dear Ladies: I can with difficulty express to you my gratitude for your very kind letter and altogether delightful box. We are doing a lot of work here, I am not allowed to say just what, but it is most interesting. The place where we are billeted, I must not say where it is, is not at all bad, and our neighbors (deleted by the censor) are bully good chaps. Last week, dates not allowed, we made a raid on, I mustn't give any names, but we captured (also deleted by the censor) Boches. Am mailing you a photograph of a bunch of us in our trench. Best wishes from your affectionate Godson."

MRS. MERRIFIELD. How charming! So full of personality!

PETTY. But I didn't know that airmen lived in trenches.

SUE. Didn't you? Don't you ever read the newspapers?

MRS. OLIVER. Where's the photograph he speaks of?

MRS. HARRISON. It hasn't arrived. Now for the other surprise!

(*She unrolls the newspaper;* SUE *watches her desperately.*)

MOLLY (*to* JULIA, *indignantly*). I think it's criminally careless of the censor to let them send photographs!

(MRS. HARRISON *adjusts her glasses and opens her mouth to read when* JESSIE *enters* R. *with the package which* GEORGIANA *brought in on a former entrance and forgot to deliver.*)

JESSIE. For Mrs. Harrison. It come by registered mail this morning, and the clerk told that kid (*points to* GEORGIANA) to bring it in here, but she dropped it in the hall.

MRS. HARRISON. For me? Ah, the photograph!

(*She is about to take it when* SUE *rushes to her and seizes it.*)

SUE. No, it's some mistake—it's for me, I'm quite sure.

JESSIE (*eagerly*). No, ma'am, it's —— (*She catches* SUE'S *eye and pauses.*) At least I thought ——

MRS. HARRISON (*groping for her glasses, which in the excitement have slipped off her nose*). How can it be for you, my dear, and be addressed to me?

MOLLY. Oh, the post-office is so overworked these days that ——

SUE. It's Miss Harrison, of course.

JESSIE (*quite bewildered*). Well, maybe I did look at it wrong.

MRS. HARRISON (*who has succeeded in getting her glasses on*). Well, we'll see. Give it to me.

SUE (*up* L., *clutching package to her heart*). But, Mother, dear ——

MRS. HARRISON (*severely*). Give it to me at once, Susan. There is something very strange about all this.

(*Everybody much interested.* MRS. HARRISON *takes package.*)

MOLLY (*in a hollow aside*). Strange!

MRS. HARRISON (*reading*). Mrs. David B. Harrison, as plain as day. That will do, Jessie.

JESSIE (*awed*). Yes, ma'am.

(*She goes* R., *but lingers in the doorway.*)

MRS. HARRISON (*opening package slowly*). It is the photograph. How thoughtful of the lieutenant! For mercy's sake!

ALL. Well?

(MOLLY, *up* L., SUE, *up* L. C., *and* JULIA, R. C., *eye each other in terror.*)

MRS. HARRISON (*coming down* C.). It isn't ——

MRS. OLIVER. Isn't what?

MRS. HARRISON. It may be my eyes, but it certainly does not appear to be a group of airmen in a trench.

(MRS. MERRIFIELD, MRS. FAIRFAX, PETTY, JULIA, SUE, MOLLY, JESSIE *gather around her to look.* MRS. OLIVER *continues to wind the wool held by* GEORGIANA.)

MRS. MERRIFIELD. I didn't know they had grand pianos in the trenches!

PETTY. How old they look!

MRS. FAIRFAX. They seem to be knitting!

JESSIE. They's writing on the other side.

MRS. HARRISON (*turning it over*). Why, so there is. (*Reads.*) "To the members of Berkeley Woman's Club with the compliments of the Red Cross Unit of the Old Gentlemen's Home!"

MOLLY. }
SUE. } Oh!
JULIA. }

(JESSIE *goes up* R. MRS. FAIRFAX *goes to table* R. MOLLY *and* SUE *to table* L. JULIA *to table* R.)

PETTY (*going back to table* R.). Well, I didn't think they wore long white beards in the aviation.

MRS. HARRISON. And now, Susy, if you will kindly explain why you wanted this package ——

JULIA. Oh, I thought you had another surprise for us!

ALL. Oh, yes!

MRS. HARRISON (*taking a chair from table* L., *seats herself* C. *and opens newspaper again*). I have. What do you think of this? (*Reads.*) "New York welcomes to-day the celebrated Ace, Lieutenant Thomas French ——"

GEORGIANA. O-o-ker-choo!

(*She sneezes frantically, tangles the wool in one mad paroxysm, and bolts out of the room,* R. JESSIE *follows her.*)

MRS. OLIVER (*wildly*). Stop! How dare you wind yourself up in my wool and then run?

MOLLY (*going* C. *and speaking excitedly to* MRS. HARRISON). Oh, do go on!

MRS. HARRISON. I am endeavoring to. (*Reads.*) "Lieutenant Thomas French, of Boston, who landed this morning at an Atlantic port and will be in the city this afternoon. It is believed that the hero is home on a secret mission of importance." Now, ladies, what do you think of that?

(*She drops paper;* MOLLY *seizes it and fairly devours it.* SUE *drops into a chair up* L. JULIA *rushes across to her and fans her.*)

PETTY. How glorious!

MRS. OLIVER (*rising, down* L.). Well, I think he might have waited till I got my yarn wound.

MRS. MERRIFIELD (*down* R.). A secret mission! How fascinating!

SUE. Do—do you suppose he'll come here?

MRS. HARRISON (C.). We could hardly hope for that. He will probably go directly to Boston to see his dear mother.

SUE (*up* L., *relieved*). Of course. I never thought of that.

MRS. HARRISON. But I have a splendid idea.

ALL. What?

MRS. HARRISON. Why couldn't two of us go to New York this afternoon and greet him before he leaves?

SUE. }
MOLLY. } Lovely! We'll adore going!

(*They come down* L.)

MRS. HARRISON. Not at all. This is not an occasion for the younger members. I, as chairman, and Mrs. Merrifield, as vice-chairman, will go. The young man will prefer it, I am sure.

(*She goes to table* L. *and commences to arrange her veil, etc.*)

JULIA (*aside*). Oh, undoubtedly; any young man would!

MRS. MERRIFIELD. It is the motherly touch of sympathy that the dear boys love! Though most of them tell me that I seem more like an elder sister.

MRS. OLIVER (*going* C. *and picking up the paper*). Well, you're old enough to lend dignity to the expedition, and that's what we want. Does it say where he's stopping?

(*They all look over her shoulder as she reads, except* MOLLY *and* SUE, *who are down* L.)

SUE (*to* MOLLY). If Mother meets that man and he tells her he's never received those letters and packages ——

MOLLY. He shan't!

SUE. He will. You can't prevent him, and Julia's failed us completely.

MOLLY (*with determination*). I shall prevent him. Listen; my car's outside; you slip up-stairs and get a hat and cloak, and in a quarter of an hour we'll be off for New York! When I'm through with Lieutenant French he'll know what to say to your mother!

SUE. I'll do it.

MOLLY. Meet me at the car in fifteen minutes.

(*Exit* SUE *quietly at* L. *while the others are reading.*)

PETTY (R. C., *enthusiastically*). Oh, isn't he too wonderfully dear! I wish Sam had gone in for Air.

MRS. OLIVER (L. C.). Nonsense. That young man will be simply unbearable when those New Yorkers get through with him!

JULIA. Oh, no, he won't. Some nice girl will see to it that he isn't. The old ladies may spoil 'em, but the young ones are still on the job. (*Comes down* R.)

MRS. MERRIFIELD. I must say, Julia, that some of your ideas strike me as distinctly unpatriotic—not to say pro-German.

MRS. HARRISON. Now, no bickering on this auspicious day. And, Cordelia, you had better be

getting ready if you intend to catch the one-thirty with ——

MOLLY (*appalled*). The one-thirty! You're not going without your luncheon, surely?

MRS. HARRISON. We'll have to. The four o'clock train is the next one, and that might be too late.

MRS. MERRIFIELD. But, my dear Lucy, I don't think it's sensible to go without one's luncheon. I have such a delicate stomach.

(MOLLY *crosses* R. *to* JULIA.)

MOLLY (*savagely, to* JULIA). They mustn't take that train!

JULIA. Well, how are you going to stop them?

(MOLLY *crosses* L. *and pretends to work.* MRS. OLIVER *relinquishes the paper to* MRS. FAIRFAX, *who sits at table* L.)

MRS. OLIVER (R. C.). You pamper yourself, Cordelia. With your physique, you could live on your tissues for hours and hours without suffering.

MRS. MERRIFIELD (R. C.). If you are going to be vulgar, Sarah, I don't care to listen to you. You just try living on your tissues once and see how sustaining they are!

(*Enter* JESSIE, R., *dragging the unwilling* GEORGIANA *with her.*)

JESSIE. Here she is, Mrs. Oliver; I caught her sneaking out the back way.

MRS. OLIVER (*crossing to chair down* L., *where her yarn is*). Come here.

GEORGIANA (*yielding in desperation*). My Gawd! Ain't you never goin' to git through windin' that stuff?

(*She comes down* L. *and sits.*)

MRS. MERRIFIELD. I always knew that child came from the slums. She ought to be disinfected before she touches that wool.

(MRS. OLIVER, *seated down* L., *commences to wind.*)

MRS. OLIVER. I'll disinfect her with a little good hard work.

MRS. HARRISON (*who has got her veil adjusted, her glasses put away, and her bag arranged*). Well, Cordelia, are you coming?

MRS. MERRIFIELD (*taking off her cap and apron*). I won't be a minute. (*She starts* L.)

MOLLY (*at window—aside*). Oh, dear, what can Susy be doing?

MRS. FAIRFAX (*wildly, with paper in hand*). Oh, how very terrible!

ALL. What!

MRS. FAIRFAX (*rising and coming down* R.). It says here that Jack Spalding, of Berkeley, is missing ——

ALL. Missing!

(MRS. MERRIFIELD *pauses up* L.)

MRS. FAIRFAX. Missing, and believed to be in the hands of the enemy!

(JULIA *takes paper.*)

MRS. HARRISON (*dropping into a chair* L.). Oh! In the hands of the enemy! Oh, the poor, poor boy! Where is Susy?

MOLLY (*frightened*). Up-stairs. Oh, don't tell her until we're sure!

JULIA. I'm afraid it's sure enough. It says here that through some error his name had been confused with another, and it has just been straightened out. It happened a month ago in a night raid.

MRS. HARRISON (*dazed*). In the hands of the enemy! Why, it doesn't seem more than a month ago that he was coming to see my Susy! I—I—he—he was a very—good young fellow—he ——

(*She breaks down and cries on* MOLLY'S *shoulder. All through this scene the sincerity of the women's feelings must be shown in contrast to their previous*

indifference, and the artificial character of their devotion to Lieutenant French.)

JULIA. It says here that he was trying to bring off a wounded comrade when it happened.

(MRS. MERRIFIELD *comes down* L. C.)

MRS. OLIVER. He would—he was just that kind of boy! Many's the time I've warned him about being so reckless. I can see him now hanging by the seat of his trousers to a picket in my fence!

(*She bursts into tears.*)

GEORGIANA (*following suit with a howl*). Boo hoo!

MRS. MERRIFIELD (L. C., *wiping her eyes with a bandage*). It was so like him to stick by his comrade!

MRS. FAIRFAX (R.). That's the kind of men we raise over here!

MRS. MERRIFIELD (*weeping*). Well, you needn't snap at me, Frances; I guess I'm just as fond of them as you are!

JESSIE (*up* R.). Didn't none of you know him like I did! He got my Jim a job and told him if he got fired he'd lick him! He was a grand boy!

GEORGIANA (*down* L.). An' onct he took off his hat to me in the street, he did!

MRS. HARRISON (*coming to* C.). Why do you all keep on talking as though the poor boy was dead? He's only a prisoner, and you can do things for prisoners. We can send him food and money and letters ——

MRS. MERRIFIELD. But will he get them?

(*She comes down to* MRS. OLIVER, *extreme* L.)

MRS. OLIVER. Good gracious, Cordelia, let's send 'em before we begin worrying about that. I move that we form another committee and ——

MRS. HARRISON. Oh, bother committees! Let's get to work! I'm going to get our boy out of prison

if I have to go over and poison Von Hindenburg myself!

ALL. Hurrah!

MRS. MERRIFIELD (*her hands over her ears*). Then you don't want to go to the city before luncheon?

MRS. HARRISON. Don't talk to me about the city; I'm thinking!

MOLLY. Oh, Aunt Lucy, you're a darling, and ——

GEORGIANA. Hist! (MOLLY *looks startled.*) Why don't you tell her?

MOLLY. Oh, Aunt Lucy, I must tell you that you haven't treated poor Jack as badly as you meant to. You see, Sue and I ——

MRS. HARRISON. Well?

JULIA. Yes, you see they ——

GEORGIANA. Aw, gwan! They mixed the babies, that's all.

MRS. HARRISON. What!

MOLLY (*desperately*). We—we sent the letters and packages to Jack instead of to Tom—I mean, Lieutenant French.

ALL (*in unison*). What? You did! Wonderful! How dared you? You young scamps!

MRS. HARRISON. Mary Tracy, do you mean to tell me that ——

(*The 'phone up* R. *rings.* JESSIE *answers.*)

JESSIE. Hello? Yes. Hold the wire. (*Putting down receiver.*) New York to speak to Miss Tracy.

MOLLY (*going up* R. *to 'phone*). Hello? Yes. (*To* MRS. HARRISON.) We—we thought —— (*Into 'phone.*) Hello! Oh, oh, my darling boy! (*Extreme astonishment among the others, especially* GEORGIANA.) Of course I'm wild to see you! Why didn't you tell me —— (*She listens.*)

MRS. OLIVER (*in a husky whisper*). What in the name of common sense ——

GEORGIANA (*excitedly*). Aw, cut it out, can't you?

MOLLY (*into 'phone*). Can I come? Of course I can; the car's at the door. Where are you, dearest?

(*Enter* SUE, *in hat and coat, stands in doorway,* L. MOLLY, *into 'phone.*) Oh, how wonderful, darling! I am so glad and happy! Yes, this very minute! Good-bye. (*Rings off, sees* SUE.) Oh, Susy, your Jack has escaped from a German prison—he knocked the guards' heads together and smashed them somehow—and he got to a boat and he's in New York now with my Tom!

ALL. What!

SUE (*grasping a chair faintly*). Escaped from a German prison!

MOLLY (*seizing* SUE *and drawing her down* L. C.). Oh, you poor lamb, I forgot you didn't know! Read this paper—no, you haven't time—we must start for New York right away. You'll let her go, won't you, Aunt Lucy?

MRS. HARRISON. You two, alone, unchaperoned, in New York? Never. But I'll go with you!

MOLLY. Oh, I forgot. I can chaperon her. You see, Tom and I were married just before he sailed last fall and ——

SUE. Molly!

JULIA (R. C.). You little villain!

MRS. OLIVER. If it isn't asking too much, who might Tom be?

MOLLY. Oh, of course, I forgot—why, Tom is Lieutenant French, our was-to-be godson!

(*Amazement on the part of all the others.*)

GEORGIANA (*down* L.). Gosh, I wisht I was a aviatoress!

(JESSIE *comes down extreme* R.)

SUE (*down* L. C.). No wonder you were writing to him!

MOLLY (*down* L. C., *quickly*). Yes, but I didn't break my word. I didn't tell him a thing about ——

SUE (*horrified*). Oh, Mother, we must tell you—the godson ——

MRS. HARRISON (*at* C., *putting her wraps on hur-*

riedly). Don't tell me anything more, please! I'm not interested in godsons! I want to see my son-in-law elect, who has just escaped from a German prison.

SUE (*hugging her on one side*). Mother!

MOLLY (*hugging her on the other*). Aunty!

JULIA. Girls, here's one case where the Ace and Jack both take tricks! Hurrah for both our boys!

MRS. HARRISON (*quickly*). No, Julia, hurrah for all our boys, on land and sea, in camp and in prison, in sickness, in health, in discouragement, in victory—may they all come back as these two have to the women who watch for them!

JULIA (*partly to the women, partly to the audience*). Hip, hip, hurrah!

(*All join enthusiastically.*)

PICTURE

MRS. HARRISON

SUE MOLLY

JULIA GEORGIANA

MRS. FAIRFAX MRS. OLIVER

JESSIE MRS. MERRIFIELD

CURTAIN

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A SURPRISE PARTY AT BRINKLEY'S. An Entertainment in One Scene, by WARD MACAULEY. Seven male and seven female characters. Interior scene, or may be given without scenery. Costumes, modern. Time, one hour. By the author of the popular successes, "Graduation Day at Wood Hill School," "Back to the Country Store," etc. The villagers have planned a birthday surprise party for Mary Brinkley, recently graduated from college. They all join in jolly games, songs, conundrums, etc., and Mary becomes engaged, which surprises the surprisers. The entertainment is a sure success. Price, 15 cents.

JONES VS. JINKS. A Mock Trial in One Act, by EDWARD MUMFORD. Fifteen male and six female characters, with supernumeraries if desired. May be played all male. Many of the parts (members of the jury, etc.) are small. Scene, a simple interior; may be played without scenery. Costumes, modern. Time of playing, one hour. This mock trial has many novel features, unusual characters and quick action. Nearly every character has a funny entrance and laughable lines. There are many rich parts, and fast fun throughout. Price, 15 cents.

THE SIGHT-SEEING CAR. A Comedy Sketch in One Act, by ERNEST M. GOULD. For seven males, two females, or may be all male. Parts may be doubled, with quick changes, so that four persons may play the sketch. Time, forty-five minutes. Simple street scene. Costumes, modern. The superintendent of a sight-seeing automobile engages two men to run the machine. A Jew, a farmer, a fat lady and other humorous characters give them all kinds of trouble. This is a regular gatling-gun stream of rollicking repartee. Price, 15 cents.

THE CASE OF SMYTHE VS. SMITH. An Original Mock Trial in One Act, by FRANK DUMONT. Eighteen males and two females, or may be all male. Plays about one hour. Scene, a county courtroom; requires no scenery; may be played in an ordinary hall. Costumes, modern. This entertainment is nearly perfect of its kind, and a sure success. It can be easily produced in any place or on any occasion, and provides almost any number of good parts. Price, 15 cents.

THE OLD MAIDS' ASSOCIATION. A Farcical Entertainment in One Act, by LOUISE LATHAM WILSON. For thirteen females and one male. The male part may be played by a female, and the number of characters increased to twenty or more. Time, forty minutes. The play requires neither scenery nor properties, and very little in the way of costumes. Can easily be prepared in one or two rehearsals. Price, 25 cents.

BARGAIN DAY AT BLOOMSTEIN'S. A Farcical Entertainment in One Act, by EDWARD MUMFORD. For five males and ten females, with supers. Interior scene. Costumes, modern. Time, thirty minutes. The characters and the situations which arise from their endeavors to buy and sell make rapid-fire fun from start to finish. Price, 15 cents.

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Successful Plays for All Girls

In Selecting Your Next Play Do Not Overlook This List

YOUNG DOCTOR DEVINE. A Farce in Two Acts, by MRS. E. J. H. GOODFELLOW. One of the most popular plays for girls. For nine female characters. Time in playing, thirty minutes. Scenery, ordinary interior. Modern costumes. Girls in a boarding-school, learning that a young doctor is coming to vaccinate all the pupils, eagerly consult each other as to the manner of fascinating the physician. When the doctor appears upon the scene the pupils discover that the physician is a female practitioner. Price, 15 cents.

SISTER MASONS. A Burlesque in One Act, by FRANK DUMONT. For eleven females. Time, thirty minutes. Costumes, fantastic gowns, or dominoes. Scene, interior. A grand expose of Masonry. Some women profess to learn the secrets of a Masonic lodge by hearing their husbands talk in their sleep, and they institute a similar organization. Price, 15 cents.

A COMMANDING POSITION. A Farcical Entertainment, by AMELIA SANFORD. For seven female characters and ten or more other ladies and children. Time, one hour. Costumes, modern. Scenes, easy interiors and one street scene. Marian Young gets tired living with her aunt, Miss Skinflint. She decides to "attain a commanding position." Marian tries hospital nursing, college settlement work and school teaching, but decides to go back to housework. Price, 15 cents.

HOW A WOMAN KEEPS A SECRET. A Comedy in One Act, by FRANK DUMONT. For ten female characters. Time, half an hour. Scene, an easy interior. Costumes, modern. Mabel Sweetly has just become engaged to Harold, but it's "the deepest kind of a secret." Before announcing it they must win the approval of Harold's uncle, now in Europe, or lose a possible ten thousand a year. At a tea Mabel meets her dearest friend. Maude sees Mabel has a secret, she coaxes and Mabel tells her. But Maude lets out the secret in a few minutes to another friend and so the secret travels. Price, 15 cents.

THE OXFORD AFFAIR. A Comedy in Three Acts, by JOSEPHINE H. COBB and JENNIE E. PAINE. For eight female characters. Plays one hour and three-quarters. Scenes, interiors at a seaside hotel. Costumes, modern. The action of the play is located at a summer resort. Alice Graham, in order to chaperon herself, poses as a widow, and Miss Oxford first claims her as a sister-in-law, then denounces her. The onerous duties of Miss Oxford, who attempts to serve as chaperon to Miss Howe and Miss Ashton in the face of many obstacles, furnish an evening of rare enjoyment. Price 15 cents.

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